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Incumbent holds off challenge from Young to lead local branch

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**BODY:**

Incumbent G. I. Johnson held off a challenge from former state Sen. Larry Young, handily winning re-election last night as president of the Baltimore branch of the NAACP.

Johnson received 233 votes to 174 for Young in the hotly contested election.

The election was originally held Nov. 21 but was suspended by the national office after Young learned his name was not on the ballot. Young's name was placed on the ballot last week after the national office ruled that he had the required signatures.

The election was held Wednesday, and the counting of ballots continued yesterday.

"God's people want this organization to continue to grow and progress in America," Johnson said. "We are about the business of civil rights for each and every individual in this country and abroad. I believe that Mr. Young was sort of being misled that we are a political organization, and I believe that Mr. Young now understands that we are about the business of civil rights.

"Hopefully Mr. Young will come on board to help the organization to make strides in Baltimore City whereas we believe there should be one Baltimore."

Young was unavailable for comment.

A total of 419 people voted, but some didn't vote for president. Candidates on Johnson's ticket for first vice president, second vice president, secretary and treasurer were elected.

Johnson re-elected to top NAACP post; Incumbent holds off challenge from Young to lead local branch The Baltimore Sun December 22, 2000 Friday

State Sen. Joan Carter-Conway, running on Young's ticket, was elected third vice president.

Elections at branches of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People usually don't attract much attention. But things heated up in Baltimore after Young tossed his hat in the ring shortly before the November election.

Young, 51, the first person ousted from the Maryland Senate in more than two centuries, was acquitted of bribery and tax evasion charges in September 1999, after a judge threw out extortion charges. Many observers believe the West Baltimore Democrat is beginning a campaign to oust Democratic state Sen. Clarence M. Mitchell IV. Mitchell defeated John D. Jefferies, who was appointed to serve out Young's term after Young was expelled in 1998.

By 5:40 p.m., more than 300 people had voted Wednesday, according to Eric Bryant, assistant director of national field operations for the NAACP. That was nearly triple the turnout of 1998, when Johnson defeated Rodney A. Orange 77-27.

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